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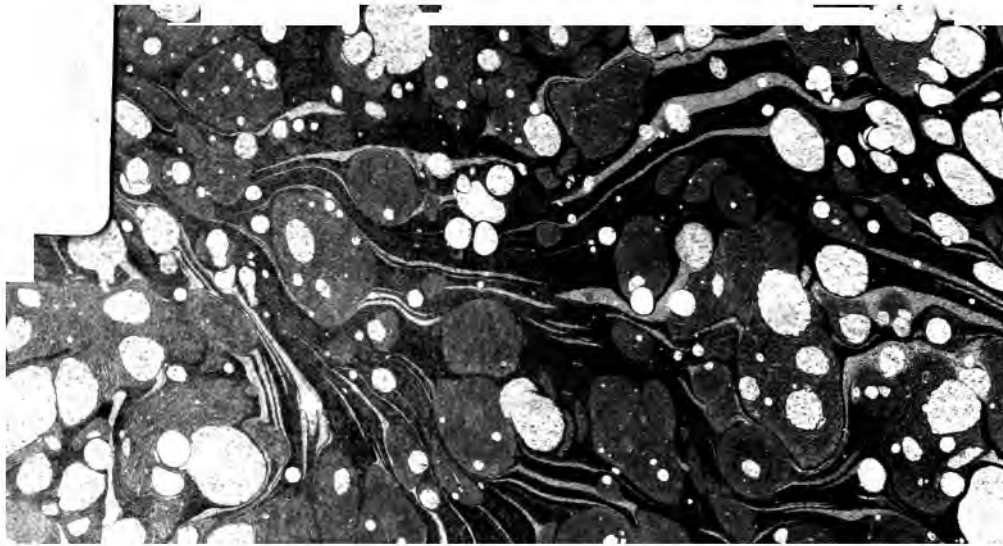

CHRIST JESUS the LORD

Conſidered as

The inexhauſtible MATTER *of* GOSPEL-PREACHING.

IN A

SERMON

At the ORDINATION *of the Reverend Mr.* JAMES MAIR *to be Miniſter of the* ASSOCIATE CONGREGATION *at* Lintoun,

May 29. 1740.

BIBLIOTHECA BODLEIANA OXONIENSIS

By JAMES FISHER *Miniſter of the Goſpel at* Kinclaven.

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2 Cor. iv. 5.

For we preach not ourſelves, but Chriſt Jeſus the Lord, and ourſelves your Servants for Jeſus Sake.

In this Epiſtle the *Apoſtle* vindicates himſelf from the Calumnies and Aſperſions of the *falſe Teachers* of theſe Times, not only in aſſerting the Validity of his Miſſion to the holy Miniſtry, which ſome of them ſeemed to queſtion, but alſo in affirming that he diſcharged his paſtoral Office from a ſincere Regard to the real Edification of loſt Sinners, and not from any ſelfiſh View, or carnal Biaſs whatever, as you may ſee in the Words of our Reading: *For we preach not ourſelves, but Chriſt Jeſus the Lord*, &c.

In which Words you may notice, *1ſt.* The *Duty* of Goſpel Miniſters; it is to *preach* (*we preach*) the Word ſignifies, to proclaim or publiſh a Thing with a loud and audible Voice, that all may hear, in Alluſion to Cryers or Heraulds, who pub-

liſh the Edicts of Magiſtrates. *Miniſters* indeed are, by their Office, *Cryers* or *Heraulds*, not to proclaim the Edicts and Commands of *earthly Princes*, but to *lift up* their *Voice like a Trumpet*, in declaring *the whole Council of God.* 2*dly.* You have the *Subject*, or the *Matter* of Goſpel-Preaching, expreſſed *negatively*; it is *not ourſelves*, but it is, or ought to be, *Chriſt Jeſus the Lord.* Under theſe Names, here given to the glorious Redeemer, is comprehended the whole *Matter* of Goſpel-Preaching. Chriſt ſignifies *Anointed*, and under this Name are included all the Doctrines relating to his eternal Deſignation and Appointment to the Office of Mediator, and the unmeaſurable Communication of the Spirit to him, for the Diſcharge of his mediatory Offices. Jeſus ſignifies a *Saviour*, and under this Name are contained all the Doctrines relating to his wonderful Incarnation, his exemplary Life, and meritorious Death; or all the Truths that are comprehended under the Impetration or Purchaſe of our Redemption, the Honour of all the divine Attributes manifeſted thereby, together with the Circumſtances of the Perſons whom he came to ſave. Again, the ſame glorious Perſon is to be preached as he is the Lord, which takes in all the Doctrines pertaining *to his Exaltation*, his ſupreme Headſhip

over

over his Church, and the powerful Application of the Redemption purchaſed by him; ſo that if we knew what it were to preach Chriſt Jeſus the Lord, we would find, that under theſe *three* comprehenſive Words are contained all the Truths that we are commanded in Scripture to believe concerning God, and all the Duties which God requires of Man. *3dly.* You have the laborious Office of the Miniſtry deſcribed, in theſe Words, *ourſelves your Servants for Jeſus Sake.* Miniſters are *Servants*, which imports Faithfulneſs and diligent Labour; they are employed in ſerving Sinners of *Adam's* Family; ſays the Apoſtle here, we are *your Servants*, to ſerve you with all the Bleſſings of the new Covenant, to *ſpend and be ſpent* in your Service. The Names in Scripture given to Miniſters, ſuch as *Paſtors*, *Stewards*, *Watchmen*, *Labourers*, all import a *Service*, excluding any Thing like Domination, or lording it over *God's Heritage*, but including Humility, Induſtry, Fidelity, Love and Helpfulneſs. Chriſt only hath Domination and Pre-eminence, all his Office-Bearers are but *Servants* or *Miniſters*; like the Prieſts and Levites, they are to *ſerve the Lord and his People* Iſrael, 2 *Chr.* xxxv. 3. But then they are Servants *for Jeſus Sake*, which imports the great Love that Chriſt has to loſt Sinners, and that

this

this Love is ſhed abroad in the Hearts of his faithful Servants, who, upon that Account, beſeech Sinners, in *Chriſt's Stead*, to be reconciled unto God.

Having thus explained the Words, I ſhall eſſay, as the Lord ſhall aſſiſt, to diſcourſe upon them ſuitable to the Occaſion of our Meeting, in the following Order. 1*ſt*. I ſhall ſpeak of the *Matter* of Goſpel-Preaching, as it is here expreſſed in our Text, both negatively and poſitively. 2*dly*. Of the *Manner* in which Chriſt Jeſus the Lord is to be preached. 3*dly*. Of the Office of Goſpel-Miniſters, as they are *Servants*, firſt of Chriſt, and then of Sinners, for Jeſus Sake. 4*thly*. Deduce ſome *Inferences* for the *Application*.

I. I am to eſſay to offer ſome Thoughts upon the *Matter* of Goſpel-Preaching, as it is here expreſſed in our Text, both negatively and poſitively; it is not to be *ourſelves*, but *Chriſt Jeſus the Lord*; and upon this Head I ſhall,

Firſt, Speak of what is *not* to be the Matter of our Preaching; we are *not* to preach *ourſelves*.

Self is the great Rival that the Lord Jeſus has in the Hearts of the Children of Men; it not only prefers ſinful Pleaſures, and the lawful Comforts of Life, unto him, *but wants* to ſhare with him in our moſt

ſo-

ſolemn Duties and religious Exerciſes. There is no Need for crying up this *Idol* of *Self*, and exalting it above the Authority of God in his Word, as is done at this Day; for I make no Doubt to affirm, that *Self-Love* is the leading Principle of Action to all Men in a natural State. It was Self-Love that made *Pharaoh* oppreſs *Iſrael*, leſt they ſhould become too many and ſtrong for him; it was Self-Intereſt that made *Jeroboam* ſet up the *Calves* at *Dan* and *Bethel*, leſt Unity of Worſhip ſhould reduce the Ten Tribes to the Houſe of *David* again. It was nothing but Self-Love that made *Demetrius* and the *Craftſmen* cry up *Diana*, and cry down the Goſpel of Chriſt, *Acts* xix. 24, 27. ſo that *Self* is the *chief End* of every natural Man; therefore, that which conſtitutes the Difference between a natural and renewed Man, is this, *Self* is the End of the one, *Chriſt* is the End of the other. The natural Man ſtudies nothing more than to gratify his Self-Love, *that is*, Love to himſelf is that which moves him on to all the Actions of Life, whether natural or moral; his Happineſs is only in himſelf, and therefore he muſt live to himſelf, and can have no higher End than to gratify *Self* one Way or other. But the Deſire of the new Creature is to be *denied* to Self, to be denied to *ſinful Self* abſolutely, without

any

any Reſerve or Exception; to have the Ocean of Corruption, and all the Streams that flow from it, quite dried up in the Soil, crying with the *Apoſtle*, *Rom.* vii. 24. *Who ſhall deliver me from the Body of this Death.* The Believer deſires alſo to be denied to *natural Self conditionally*, or upon Suppoſition of a Call in adorable Providence, *that is*, he deſires, thro' Grace, to part with outward Eaſe, Reputation, Houſes, Lands, Wife, Children, yea, Life itſelf, or whatever is dear to him in this World, when it ſtands in Oppoſition to, or in Competition with the Glory of the Redeemer, and the Intereſt of his Kingdom. Thus the Apoſtle *Paul*, *Acts* xxi. 13. *I am ready, not to be bound only, but to die at* Jeruſalem *for the Name of the Lord Jeſus.* And then, as to *religious Self*, the Believer deſires to be denied to all his Duties and Graces, in Point of Righteouſneſs or Juſtification before God, and to rely upon the Righteouſneſs of the Lord Chriſt alone, as the ſole Ground of his Pardon and Acceptance in the Sight of God. In a Word, as the Believer's Happineſs lies *without himſelf*, ſo he deſires to aim at the Glory of God, and of the Redeemer, as his greateſt and chiefeſt End; agreeable to this is the Exhortation of the Apoſtle, 1 *Cor.* x. 31. *Whether therefore ye eat or drink, or whatſoever ye do, do all to the Glory of God;*

and

and, in order to this, we find that it was one great End of the Death of Chriſt, to take Sinners off from *Self*, to reſt only on a God in Chriſt, as the All of their Happineſs and Salvation, 2 *Cor.* v. 15. *He died for all, that they which live ſhould not henceforth live unto themſelves, but unto him which died for them and roſe again.* As *Adam*'s Sin hath *ſet up Self*, in Oppoſition to the Authority of God, ſo the Death of Chriſt hath *put down Self*, and advanced God in the Soul to his Right of being our chief End. Since then *Self* is ſuch a beloved *Idol*, that Men naturally want to exalt it above all that is called God, to the Ruin of their own Souls, we ought all of us carefully to be aware of it, eſpecially we that are Miniſters, in delivering God's Meſſage to loſt Sinners, anent their eternal Salvation. The *Apoſtle* here diſclaims it in his own Practice; *We preach not ourſelves*, ſays he; and ſo ought every Miniſter of the Goſpel, thro' Grace, to endeavour to guard againſt *Self*, in the Diſcharge of his paſtoral Office.

In ſpeaking therefore to what the *Apoſtle* here diſclaims, as the Matter of his preaching, when he ſays, *We preach not ourſelves*, it will be native to enquire, *when Miniſters may be ſaid to preach themſelves.*

1. When they *run unſent*, and obtrude themſelves upon the Lord's Heritage, not

only without their Conſent, but when they are actually teſtifying and reclaiming againſt it; and in this Caſe, when People are willing to call a Goſpel-Miniſter to feed their Souls, they who intrude upon them can be ſaid to act from no better Principle than *Self-Intereſt*; the *Fleece*, and not the *Flock*, muſt certainly be in their Eye; and therefore they practically declare that their preaching is not for the Edification of Souls, but only a *Mean in Law* to obtain a *Livelihood*; of all ſuch the Lord ſays, *Jer.* xxiii. 21, 32. *I have not ſent theſe Prophets, yet they ran; I have not ſpoken unto them, yet they prophefied: Therefore they ſhall not profit this People at all.* But then, altho' *Intruders*, who previous to, or without Regard to any Call, accept of a *Preſentation* to a Benefice, do openly proclaim to the whole World that they make a *Trade* of preaching *only* for a *Livelihood*, yet it is poſſible that *others*, who have a fair enough outward Call to the Miniſtry, may have *Gain* alſo chiefly in their View, therefore they will be look'd upon, in the Sight of God, to *preach themſelves*, (whatever their Call or Character, in the Sight of the World, may otherways be) who preach for *filthy Lucre's Sake*, or for their own private Intereſt, like the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, who, for a *Pretence*, *made long Prayers*, that they might *devour Widows*

Widows Houſes, making Gain of an outward Shew of Godlineſs. Of all ſuch it may be ſaid, as of the Prieſts and Prophets of *Jeruſalem*, *Micah* iii. 11. *The Prieſts thereof teach for Hire, the Prophets thereof divine for Money, yet will they lean upon the Lord, and ſay, Is not the Lord among us? No Evil ſhall come upon us.* Now, as one *Self-Seeker* had very nigh brought Ruin upon the whole Camp of *Iſrael*, ſo, when there are a Multitude of *Self-Seekers* in a Church, you may ſee what Deſolation they bring upon it, *Verſe* 12. *Therefore ſhall* Zion, *for your Sake, be plowed as a Field, and* Jeruſalem *ſhall become Heaps, and the Mountain of the Houſe as the high Places of the Foreſt.*

2. Miniſters *preach themſelves*, when they ſtudy the Applauſe of the *People*, more than their Souls Edification; ſuch are all theſe, who, either in compoſing or delivering their Sermons, have no higher Aim than how to pleaſe their Audience, ſo as to get a Name to themſelves that they *preach well*: This was far from the Practice of the *Apoſtles* of our Lord, recorded in Scripture for the Imitation of their Succeſſors in ordinary Office, 1 *Theſſ.* ii. 4. *But as we were allowed of God to be put in Truſt with the Goſpel, even ſo we ſpeak, not as pleaſing Men, but God which trieth our Hearts.*

3. They

3. They preach *themſelves*, who vent the *ceits of their own Heart*, as the Expreſſi *Jer.* xxiii. 26. *that is*, who induſtriouſly deavour to deceive People into a Liking of Compliance with the Inventions of their Heart, however inconſiſtent with the pure \ of God; whereby the Hearts of the Righ are made ſad, and the Hands of the Wi ſtrengthned. Such are all theſe who ſuppo *ſolute Church Authority*, by vindicating fro Pulpit, or otherways, the ſeveral Acts and ciſions which have been of late Years pa the *preſent* Judicatories, like the *Statutes of ri*, ſo manifeſtly in Oppoſition to the Laws Commandments of *Zion*'s King, publiſhed i Word. Such are theſe alſo who defend th *remonies* of human Invention introduced the Worſhip of God; and theſe likeways cry up *Union* with a Church as an eſſe Branch of the Chriſtian Character, altho' cannot pretend to enforce that Union fro Scripture *Marks* of the Church of the li God, particularly, that it is *the Pillar Ground of Truth*, 1 *Tim.* iii. 15. Of all ſu may be ſaid, *In vain do you worſhip me, t ing for Doctrines the Commandments of* Under this Head may be included, as pr ing *themſelves*, or the *Deceits of their own H* who in their Sermons inveigh ſeverely again Injuries they look upon as done to themſe but can paſs with little or no Notice the *p* Injuries done to the Cauſe and Intereſt of C *Such are all* theſe who reflect upon the P *for leaving* their Miniſtry, (notwithſtandi *the juſt* Grounds they may have for ſo

as one of the greateſt Grievances of the Times, altho' it is plain, that *withdrawing* is the only *open Teſtimony* that the People can give againſt Backſliders, who refuſe to be reclaimed; and you will obſerve, that there are many of them, at this Day, of the ſame Spirit with *Paſhur* the falſe Prophet, who *ſmote Jeremiah*, and *put him in the Stocks*, Chap. xx. 2. becauſe he declared the whole Council of God, and could not fall in with, but teſtified againſt the Meaſures of the falſe Prophets of theſe Times.

4. They preach *themſelves*, who ſtudy fine Language and Oratory in their Sermons, more than ſubſtantial Matter, whoſe chief Concern is about the Propriety of the Stile, without being ſolicitous whether they are underſtood by the Bulk of their Hearers or not, providing only they pleaſe a few whom they look upon to be *Men of Taſte*; and it is to be lamented, that, for ordinary, in ſuch Sermons, the *peculiar Doctrines* of Chriſtianity, upon which the Faith of poor Sinners is terminate only for Salvation, are induſtriouſly kept out. This is preaching with the *enticing Words of Man's Wiſdom*, quite contrary to the Practice of the *Apoſtles* of our Lord, ſet down for the Imitation of all Goſpel-Miniſters, who did not *ſpeak the Wiſdom of this World, nor of the Princes of this World that come to nought; but the Wiſdom of God in a Myſtery, even the hidden Wiſdom which God ordained before the World unto our Glory*, 1 *Cor.* ii. 6, 7.

5. Miniſters preach *themſelves*, when they handle the Word of God deceitfully, and give an *uncertain Sound*, who do not give faithful Warning *againſt* the Sins, and for the Duties of the Time-

Times, but ſtudy to pleaſe Men with flatter
Words, and make their Sermons *Tools* for
vancing their own political Ends, either in pl
ſing the *People*, or the *leading Party*, as it ma
moſt for their worldly Intereſt.

In a Word, they *preach themſelves*, who, eitl
in ſtudying or delivering their Sermons, have
the Glory of God, and the Salvation of Sinn
at Heart, and who do not endeavour in a W
of looking to the Lord, and, as in his Sight,
ſearch out *that Matter* from the Holy Scr
tures, which they judge will be moſt ſuitable
the Converſion of Sinners, and the Edification
Saints. Thus I have ſhewed, in ſome Partic
lars, what is *not* to be the *Matter* of our prea
ing; we are not to preach *ourſelves* in any of
above or like Inſtances.

I proceed now to ſpeak of the *poſitive Mat*
of Goſpel-Preaching, what it is that we are
preach, or what ought to be the Sum and Su
ſtance of all our Sermons; the Text ſays, i
Chriſt Jeſus the Lord. This is a comprehenſi
Subject indeed, a Subject that will furniſh
bundance of Matter for all our Sermons while t
World ſtands, and for all the *Praiſes* of the
deemed Company, from among Men, thro' t
Ages of Eternity. It is therefore but a very f
Hints that we can give of this *inexhauſtible M*
ter of Goſpel-Preaching, *Chriſt Jeſus the Lor*

In general, *Chriſt Jeſus the Lord* is the *Su*
and *Subſtance* of the whole *Bible*, *John* v.
Search the Scriptures, ſays he, *for they are t*
which teſtify of me. He is the Object of
Faith, and the Foundation of all Chriſtian Pr
tice; by him do we believe in God, and w

out him we can do nothing. So that to preach *Chriſt Jeſus the Lord*, is to preach him as the *Sum* of all the *Promiſes*, the *Fulfilment* of all the *Types*, and the *Accompliſhment* of all the *Prophecies* in the Bible concerning the *Meſſiah*. It is to make him the *Matter* and Subſtance of our preaching. *I determined*, ſays the Apoſtle, *not to know any Thing among you, ſave Jeſus Chriſt and him crucified*, 1 *Cor.* ii. 2. All the *Materials* of Goſpel-Preaching have a manifeſt Relation to Chriſt. Are we to preach the *Duties* of Religion, or the Doctrines relating to Chriſtian Practice? Then we ought, at the ſame Time, to ſhew that all the Duties, which God requires of Man, are to be done in the Strength of Chriſt. *I can do all Things thro' Chriſt which ſtrengtheneth me*, *Phil.* iv. 13. We ſhould teach, that it is the Love of Chriſt ſhed abroad in our Hearts, that conſtraineth us unto all acceptable Obedience, *He that hath my Commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me*, *John* xiv. 21. When the Duties of Religion are enforced and urged, it ought to be done in a *Connection with the Promiſe*: There cannot be a more forcible Motive to Obedience than to know and believe that a gracious God has required nothing of us in Point of Duty, but what he has promiſed Furniture and Strength for the Performance, or, in other Words, that the ſame Duties required of us in one Place of the Bible, are to be found *promiſed Bleſſings* in another, for it is *God that worketh in us both to will and to do*; hence he ſays, *I will cauſe you to walk in my Statutes, and ye ſhall keep my Judgments and* do them, Ezek. *xxxvi. 27.* Are we to preach the Myſteries of

the

the Goſpel? Then we cannot do this b
a Relation to Chriſt, for all the Myſteri
believed have Chriſt wrapt up in them.
Things are written, that ye might belie
Jeſus is the Chriſt, the Son of God, John
The *peculiar Doctrines* of the Goſpel,
Doctrines which are purely ſupernatura
diſtinguiſh the Goſpel from the Law of
cannot be preached but with a Reſpe
Chriſt, as is evident from the compre
Summary of them, recorded 1 *Tim.* iii. 16
out Controverſy great is the Myſtery of Go
God was manifeſt in the Fleſh, juſtified
Spirit, ſeen of Angels, preached unto the G
believed on in the World, received up into
Are we to preach the *Promiſes* of the G
Then we ought, at the ſame Time, to ſhe
all of them have their Foundation and S
in Chriſt, *for all the Promiſes of God in*
Yea, and in him Amen, 2 *Cor.* i. 20. Are
publiſh the *Threatnings* of the Law,
Wrath of God, which *is revealed from H*
againſt all Ungodlineſs and Unrighteouſ
Men? Then we ought, at the ſame Ti
lead Sinners to Chriſt, who is the only S
ry and Refuge from Sin and Wrath; ſo
the Doctrines of Faith are to be preache
a Relation to Chriſt. Again, Are we
courage Sinners to frequent a Throne of
and to tell them what they are to ſeek
gracious God, who giveth to all Men lib
and upbraideth not? Then we are, at th
Time, to aſſure them, that whatever pr
Bleſſing they ſhall ask in Chriſt's Name,
be given unto them, *John* xvi. 23. Whatſoe

ſhall ask the Father in my Name, he will give it you. Are we to preach the Nature, Ends and Uſes of the *Sacraments* of the New Teſtament? Then we cannot do this without ſhewing that *Baptiſm* and the *Lord's Supper* are inſtituted Memorials of him who was ſacrificed for us. So that to preach Chriſt, is to make him the Argument, Matter, or Subject of our Preaching, or to declare the whole Council of God concerning the Salvation of loſt Sinners thro' Jeſus Chriſt our Lord. But, more particularly,

We are to preach, that there was Love in the Heart of God from Eternity, towards a Company of *Adam's* Family, whom he foreſaw, that, with the reſt of Mankind, they would plunge themſelves into a State of Sin and Miſery, and that they would be irrecoverably loſt, for any Thing they could do for their own Relief. *Jer.* xxxi. 3. *I have loved thee with an everlaſting Love.* 1 *John* iv. 10. *Herein is Love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us.*

That this amazing Love, which is eſſential to God, might be vented to Mankind-Sinners, in a Conſiſtency with the Honour of the other glorious Attributes of the Divine Nature, the Lord Chriſt, the ſecond Perſon of the adorable Trinity, God *every Way equal* with the *Father* and *Holy Ghoſt*, engaged from Eternity to be *Mediator*, to aſſume our Nature into perſonal Union with himſelf, to obey the Law and ſuffer in our Room, and to *do* and *be* every Thing that was neceſſary for bringing many Sons and Daughters into Glory. *Pſal.* xl. 7. *Then, ſaid I, lo, I come.*

We are to preach, that, in conſequence of this Tranſaction, no ſooner had Man ſinned, than

preſently the eternal Purpoſe and Scheme of Salvation was diſcovered and revealed, in the Promiſe of the *Seed* of the Woman to bruiſe the Head of the Serpent, *Gen.* iii. 15. The Mercy and Love, which was eternally in the Boſom of God, did flow out in a plenteous Stream, upon miſerable *Adam* and his Poſterity, in the firſt Promiſe; for, while *Juſtice* is pronouncing an irreverſible Sentence of Damnation upon the fallen Angels, *Mercy* breaks immediately forth in the Promiſe of an incarnate Deity for the Redemption of fallen Man, and that before one Word of Threatning was denounced againſt him, as is evident from *Gen.* iii. that ſo the Sinner might not be diſcouraged from cloſing with the Promiſe in a Way of believing, whatever otherways was the Demerit of Sin, upon the Breach of the Firſt Covenant.

Again, to preach Chriſt, is to declare the Spring and Origin of our Sin and Miſery, which is the *Fall* of our firſt Parents, from that State of Happineſs and Glory in which they were created, whereby *all* Mankind *have ſinned and come ſhort of the Glory of God*, in regard, the *Covenant of Works* was made with, and broken by the *firſt Adam*, as the federal Head and Repreſentative of all his Poſterity. *Rom.* v. 12. *As by one Man Sin entred into the World, and Death by Sin, ſo Death paſſed upon all Men, for that all have ſinned.*

Further, we are to teach from the Word, that God has not left all Mankind to periſh in a State of Sin and Miſery, into which they voluntarily *plunged* themſelves, but, out of his mere good *Pleaſure, has* choſen ſome to everlaſting Life,

whom

whom he brings into a State of Salvation by a *Covenant of Grace*. We are to ſhew that this Covenant was made with Chriſt, as the *ſecond Adam*, and in him with all the Elect as his Seed. *Pſalm* lxxxix. 3. *I have made a Covenant with my Choſen*. That all the good Things neceſſary to eternal Life, or neceſſary to the *Being* of a Believer, are freely and *abſolutely* promiſed; ſuch as the new Heart, Pardon of Sin, Perſeverance, and the like. *A new Heart will I give unto you; I will forgive their Iniquities; I will cauſe them to walk in my Statutes*; and, which comprehends all, *I will be their God, they ſhall be my People*. And conſequently we are to ſhew, that Faith, which is the Gift of God, is only the *inſtrumental Mean* of receiving and appropriating Chriſt and the Benefits of his Purchaſe, but is no Part of our juſtifying Righteouſneſs; it is only the *Hand* that *receives* that Righteouſneſs whereby we are juſtified, even the *doing* and *dying* of the Lord Jeſus, which is graciouſly imputed to us, and received by Faith alone, as our *Catechiſm* expreſſes it according to the Scripture: So that we are to ſhew, that the *Help* of periſhing Sinners is laid on Chriſt, as the *only* Ordinance of God for their Salvation; for there is no other Name given under Heaven, given among Men, whereby we muſt be ſaved, *Acts* iv. 12. and that the *Old* as well as *New Teſtament* Saints were ſaved by Faith in his Blood.

Again, to *preach Chriſt Jeſus the Lord*, is to ſet him forth as *God* made *manifeſt in the Fleſh*; that he actually aſſumed our Nature into perſonal Union with himſelf, in virtue whereof the

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human Nature ſubſiſts in the *ſecond Perſon* of the *Trinity*, without the leaſt Compoſition or Confuſion, both Natures making but *one* Perſon, in regard the human Nature never had any perſonal Subſiſtence of its own, but, from the firſt Moment of its miraculous Formation by the *Holy Ghoſt*, it ſubſiſted in Union with the *ſecond Perſon* of the *Godhead*; and therefore, tho' each Nature retain its own eſſential Properties, yet whatever Chriſt did and ſuffered, or continueth to do as *Mediator*, is not to be conſidered as the Act of *this* or *that* Nature *only*, but as the Act and Work of the *whole Perſon* of him who is both *God* and *Man*; or, which is the ſame Thing, whatever he doth, as Prophet, Prieſt and King of his Church, he performs it on account of the *Union* of both Natures in him as *Mediator*.

Moreover, we are to preach, that the Lord Jeſus aſſumed the Human Nature into perſonal Union with the Divine, that the might be *capable of performing the whole Office of a Mediator* between God and Man. That ſince God graciouſly purpoſed to ſhew Mercy to Mankind-Sinners, a *complete Satisfaction*, in our Nature and in our Room, was abſolutely *neceſſary* for the Vindication of the Truth and Veracity of God, interpoſed in the Threatning of the Law, and for the Satisfaction of *vindictive Juſtice*, which is eſſential to God, who is of purer Eyes than to behold Evil, and cannot but puniſh Sin where-ever he finds it, either in the Perſon of the Sinner, or in the Cautioner; and conſequently, tho' the Law was relaxed as to the *Perſon ſuffering*, in as much as God graciouſly accepted of a *Surety*, yet neither the Law nor Juſtice of God *could diſpence* with the Penalty which was de-

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nounced againſt the Tranſgreſſor, and therefore Chriſt ſuffered the *ſame Thing* that was threatned to Tranſgeſſors. It was not *ſomething elſe*, which God accepted in *Lieu* of the Penalty of the Law, that Chriſt ſuffered, but the *very Penalty itſelf* that was threatned therein, as appears from the *Tranſlation* of Puniſhment from the Sinner to the Surety, ſo often ſpoken of in Scripture. *Rom.* viii. 3. *God condemned Sin in the Fleſh*, that is, in the Human Nature of Chriſt as aſſumed into the Divine; and Verſe 32. *He ſpared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all.* 2 *Cor.* v. 21. *He hath made him to be Sin for us*; that is, our Sins were imputed to him, on account of which he was made an Offering or a Sacrifice; ſo that the *whole Puniſhment* contained in the *Curſe* or Sanction of the Law, was undergone by Chriſt who was *made a Curſe for us.* And if it is ſaid, that Chriſt did not undergo *eternal Death*, which is contained in the Threatning, it muſt be remembred, that it is not eſſential to the Puniſhment of the Law, that it be eternal; the Eternity of Puniſhment ariſes only from the Infirmity of the Creature, who is not able at once to bear the whole Puniſhment of Sin; but Chriſt, who is *God-Man*, was able to bear the whole Load of Divine Wrath *at once*, and therefore the *Extremity* of the Sufferings of ſuch a glorious Perſon, was in full *Compenſation* of that eternal Death which we ſhould have undergone. I have inſiſted the more largely on this Head, becauſe of the damnable *Error* vented by many in our Day, as well as by the *Socinians* of old, *namely*, that Chriſt is only an *exemplary Saviour*, and that his main Errand into the

World

World was *only* to give us an Example of Holineſs and Virtue, as they call it; whereas there is nothing more plainly revealed in Scripture, than that the Lord Jeſus was made *as countable* and liable to Juſtice for the Iniquities of an Elect World, *as if they had been his own*; that, in their Room or Stead, he actually obeyed the Law which they brake in *Adam*, and ſuffered the whole Puniſhment which was due to their Tranſgreſſion.

We preach Chriſt Jeſus the Lord, when we ſhew, for the Comfort of *Adam*'s Family, that he has *finiſhed the Work* which his Father gave him to do. *John* xix. 30. *He ſaid, It is finiſhed.* And that his Obedience unto the Death, becauſe of the Dignity of his Perſon, being of infinite Value, muſt be a Sacrifice of a ſweet-ſmelling Savour unto God, and fully ſatisfactory to offended Juſtice, as is evident from his *Reſurrection* from the Dead, his *Sitting* down on the *Right-Hand of the Majeſty on high*, the Down-pouring of his Spirit and the Efficacy of his Word on the Hearers of the Goſpel.

Again, to preach Chriſt, is to declare, that, in conſequence of his finiſhing the great Work of Redemption, he is *now made manifeſt*, and, *according to the Commandment of the everlaſting God, made known to all Nations for the Obedience of Faith*, *Rom.* xvi. 26. So that there is nothing *now*, either in Law or Juſtice, to hinder the greateſt Sinner from receiving the *unſpeakable Gift* of God, yea, on the contrary, all that hear this Goſpel are called, commanded and beſeeched to be reconciled unto God. *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleaſed, hear ye him*;

him. Look unto me, and be ye ſaved, all the Ends of the Earth. The Spirit ſaith, Come. But, at the ſame Time, we muſt ſhew, that the Heart muſt be powerfully opened to receive Chriſt as he is offered in the Goſpel. *John* vi. 44. *No Man can come unto me, except the Father, which hath ſent me, draw him.* We ſhould tell Sinners, that they muſt be God's *Workmanſhip, created in Chriſt Jeſus unto good Works*, convinced of Sin, Righteouſneſs and Judgment, by the *Spirit*, who taketh of the Things of Chriſt, and ſheweth them unto us, and that, when he comes into the Heart, he brings all Grace along with him, and carries on the Work of Sanctification there, till at Death there be not left in the Soul any Spot or Wrinkle, or any ſuch Thing.

To preach Chriſt Jeſus the Lord, is to ſet him forth in all his *Offices* unto which he is anointed and conſecrated from Eternity: That he is the great *Prophet*, or *Teacher come from God*, an *Interpreter, one among a Thouſand*, who has the Tongue of the Learned, and ſpeaketh as never Man ſpake. That he is the *high Prieſt of our Profeſſion*, who has offered up that wonderful and acceptable Sacrifice of *himſelf*, whereby we have Remiſſion of Sin, Acceſs to the Preſence of God, and all the Bleſſings of the new Covenant; and in virtue whereof it is that he maketh continual Interceſſion for us: That he is inveſted with the Office of a *King*, both for ſubduing, ruling and defending his own People, and alſo for reſtraining and conquering all his and their Enemies. *Rev.* xix. 16. *He hath on his Veſture, and on his Thigh, a Name written, KING of Kings, and LORD of Lords.* He is given to

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be Head over all Things to his Church, whom he is the only King, Judge and Lawg er; and therefore, when Chriſt is preached a King, his *Headſhip* and Sovereignty in and o his Church; as his free and independent Kir dom, ought to be *plainly* aſſerted, in *Oppoſiti* to all the *Invaſions* that have been, or are ma upon it, by *civil* or *eccleſiaſtick* Powers. T Government of his Houſe ought to be vindic ted, and Miniſters ſhould not give an uncerta Sound, but tell People, that, according to t Scripture, the Government of the Church, a due Subordination of Judicatories, ſuch *Kirk-Seſſions*, *Preſbyteries*, and *Synods* provinc and national, conſiſting of *Officers duly called* their Office, is the *only* Government in the *Ne Teſtament*, whereby the Lord Chriſt would ha his Church governed to the End of the World

Again, to preach Chriſt, is to proclaim all t Relations wherein he ſtands to Mankind-Sinne that he is a ſuitable *Saviour*, who ſaves not on from the Curſe of the Law, from the Tyranny *Satan*, and from Wrath, but alſo from Sin the greateſt of all Evils; his Name is Jeſus, *f he ſhall ſave his People from their Sin.* We a to preach him as a moſt ſympathiſing, famili and conſtant *Friend*; as a skilful and ſucceſsf *Phyſician*; as an affectionate and everlaſtin *Husband*, *I will betrothe thee unto me for ever* and as a wife, powerful and unerring *Guid* who leadeth his People in the Way wherein th ſhould go.

Further, to preach Chriſt, is to ſet him fort *in* all the Appearances that he has made on o *Behalf*; *in* his wonderful Birth, his exampla

Life, his meritorious Death, his triumphant Reſurrection and Aſcenſion, and his awful and majeſtick Appearance at the laſt Day, for *every Eye ſhall ſee him*, when he cometh in *flaming Fire* againſt his Enemies, but *to be glorified in his Saints, and admired in all them that believe*, 2 *Theſſ.* i. 8, 10.

In a Word, to preach Chriſt Jeſus the Lord, is to preach him as *made of God unto us Wiſdom, Righteouſneſs, Sanctification and Redemption.* To preach him as our All, the All of our Life, Righteouſneſs and Strength, the All of our Furniture for Work or Warfare, the All of our Stock, for *the Father loveth the Son, and hath given all Things into his Hands.* In him dwelleth all the Fulneſs of the Godhead bodily, and we are *complete in him.*

I may add, that to preach Chriſt, is to *teſtify* againſt all the Errors, Tenets or Opinions that are vented againſt the Doctrine, Worſhip, Diſcipline and Government inſtitute by him in his Word; and to this we are bound under a very awful Certification, *Luke* ix. 26. *Whoſoever ſhall be aſhamed of me, and of my Words, of him ſhall the Son of Man be aſhamed, when he ſhall come in his own Glory, and in his Father's, and of the holy Angels.* Thus I have hinted at ſome few Things only that are contained in this *inexhauſtible Matter* of Goſpel-Preaching, *Chriſt Jeſus the Lord.* I proceed to the

II *Head* of the Method, which was to ſpeak of the *Manner* in which Chriſt Jeſus the Lord, or the Doctrines relating to Faith and Practice, are to be preached.

1. We are to preach Chriſt *plainly*, ſo as to be underſtood by our Hearers, tho' they ſhould be unlearned, and of weak Capacities; we ought not, when dealing with Sinners in Chriſt's Stead, to uſe the *enticing Words of Mens Wiſdom*, or make an Oſtentation of Wit and human Eloquence, which may gratify the Ears of ſome, and be quite unintelligible to others, but we ſhould eſſay to preach Chriſt *in Demonſtration of the Spirit and of Power*, 1 *Cor.* ii. 4. that is, we are to demonſtrate, from the Word, Man's loſt State by Nature, the Way of his Recovery and Redemption by Jeſus Chriſt, and the indiſputable Right and Title that he has to the whole of this Salvation, brought near in the Promiſe to Mankind-Sinners *as ſuch*; and this Kind of Demonſtration will be powerful, thro' God, to perſuade Sinners to embrace Chriſt, as he is offered in the Goſpel. It is not by rational Arguments, but by a *Manifeſtation of the Truth*, as it lies in the Word of God, that we will commend ourſelves to every Man's Conſcience in the Sight of God, 2 *Cor.* iv. 2. It is by a *plain Goſpel-Sermon*, that the Secrets of Mens Hearts are made manifeſt, and that they are ſo convinced as to acknowledge that God is in ſuch a Preaching of a Truth, 1 *Cor.* xiv. 24, 25.

2. We ſhould preach Chriſt Jeſus the Lord with ſpiritual *Wiſdom*, ſeaſonably diſtributing *Milk* to *Babes*, and ſtronger Meat to thoſe who are of a more advanced Age, or who are privileged with a larger Meaſure of Grace. Herein lies the Wiſdom of the *Steward* of God's *Houſhold*, when he gives them their Portion of Meat

Meat in due Seaſon, applying the Scriptures to the various Circumſtances of the Hearers.

3. We are to preach Chriſt *faithfully*, not *daubing with untempered Morter*, nor diſſembling or corrupting the Word of Truth, but delivering the whole Council of God, and ſpeaking his Words, whether Men will hear or forbear, *Ezek.* ii. 7.

4. With *ſpiritual Authority*, as *Ambaſſadors for Chriſt*, delivering his Meſſage in his Name, charging Sinners to believe in Jeſus, to turn from Sin to God, and to hearken to his Voice, as they are to be anſwerable to him who will call for an Account of every Word that they hear.

5. We are to preach Chriſt with the *Spirit of Meekneſs*, as being taught of him, who is *meek and lowly in Heart*; conſidering, in the firſt Place, our own Inſufficiency for theſe Things, and the Need that we have to take to ourſelves the ſame Inſtructions that we give from the Word unto others, and this will engage us to be *gentle* among our Flock, *even as a Nurſe cheriſheth her Children*, 1 *Theſſ.* ii. 7. For, *the Servant of the Lord muſt not ſtrive, but be gentle unto all Men, apt to teach, patient, in Meekneſs inſtructing thoſe that oppoſe themſelves*, 2 *Tim.* ii. 24, 25.

6. We are to preach Chriſt *boldly* and *courageouſly*, declaring unto the Houſe of *Iſrael* their Tranſgreſſion, and to the Houſe of *Jacob* their Sin, not fearing the Countenances of any, whether great or ſmall, leaſt we be confounded before them. *Jer.* i. 17. *Thou therefore ſpeak unto them all that I command thee, be not diſmayed at their Faces, leſt I confound thee* (or, as it

is upon the Margin, break thee to Pieces) *before them.* Yet this Boldneſs ſhould be without Bitterneſs and Indiſcretion, that, when we ſhew our Zeal againſt Mens Sins, we may, at the ſame Time, manifeſt our Love to their Perſons, ſo as that their Conſciences may be convinced, that it is from an ardent Deſire of Salvation to their Souls, that we teſtify freely againſt their Sins.

Laſtly, We ſhould preach by our *Lives* as well as by our Doctrine, and thus ſhew, by our holy and circumſpect Walk and Converſation, that we ſpeak becauſe we believe. Miniſters, who build up in their own Practice any Peace of Wickedneſs, which, by their Doctrine, they would ſeem to deſtroy, make themſelves notorious Tranſgreſſors, *Gal.* ii. 18. and thereby give a ſtrong Handle to the Enemies of the Lord to blaſpheme.

III Head of the Method was to ſpeak of the *Office* of Goſpel-Miniſters as they are *Servants*, firſt of Chriſt, and then of Sinners for Jeſus Sake.

1. Goſpel-Miniſters are *Servants of Chriſt*, and it is certainly their greateſt Honour to be employed as *Ambaſſadors* of the *Prince of the Kings of the Earth.* Miniſters derive their Power and Commiſſion to exerciſe their Office from the Lord Jeſus, who is Lord and Maſter of the whole Church, hence called *Miniſters of Chriſt.* 1 *Cor.* iv. 1. *Let a Man ſo account of us as Miniſters of Chriſt, and Stewards of the Myſteries of God.* Now, as *no Man taketh this Honour unto himſelf, but he that is called of God*, ſo it *is every* Miniſter's Duty to be ſome Way clear *anent his Call* to that ſacred Office, and by what Mean

Means he was engaged to be a Servant of Chriſt in that Station. The *mediate* or *ordinary Call* to the Miniſtry is twofold, inward and outward.

The *inward Call* conſiſts in a Concurrence of theſe Things that may tend to encourage and give Clearneſs to a Man to embrace the outward Call when it ſhall offer in Providence, *namely*, an *Evidence* of fit Qualifications for ſuch a weighty Work, ſuch as experimental Godlineſs, Soundneſs of Doctrine, and Aptneſs to teach. But now you muſt obſerve, that it is not the mere *having* of theſe Gifts, that will be ſufficient to clear a Man's Call to himſelf, but the *Trial* of them *notified* to him by theſe to whom the Trial of Gifts is committed by the Lord Jeſus, and an orderly authoritative Miſſion followng thereupon; hence you will find the *Exerciſe* of the Gift, and the laying on of the Hands of the *Presbytery* joined together, 1 *Tim.* iv. 14. So that a Man's own *Thoughts* of himſelf are not the Rule by which he is to judge of his Fitneſs or Unfitneſs for the Work of the Miniſtry, but the Judgment of the *Presbytery*, to whom the Trial of Gifts is committed by the Lord Jeſus. Again, to the inward Call there concurs a *Singleneſs of Aim.* It may be very clearing to a Man to undertake this Office, if he has the Teſtimony of his Conſcience, that it is the Glory of God, the Edification of Souls, and the gathering of them to Chriſt, that he has in his Eye, eſpecially if there goes along with this an *inward Impulſe*, or Motion of the Spirit of God upon the Heart, ſwaying and inclining the Perſon to undertake the Office of the Miniſtry, if the Lord, in his Providence, ſhall open a *Door*. *Only*, to prevent Miſtakes on this Head,

the Perſons I am ſpeaking of ought carefully to examine, whether this Impulſe, which ſways them to the Office of the Miniſtry beyond any other Buſineſs of Life, flow from the Spirit of the Lord, or their own Spirits. To know this, if the *Impulſe* is *ſpiritual*, or flows from the Spirit of the Lord, it will have theſe three neceſſary Properties; it will be ſanctifying, regular, and qualifying; I ſay, if it is a ſpiritual Impulſe, it will be *ſanctifying* and *humbling*, attended with an inward Deſire of further Conformity to God in Holineſs, both in Heart and Life, and low abaſing Thoughts of ourſelves, as no Way *ſufficient for theſe Things*. Again, it will be a *regular* Impulſe, inclining a Perſon to enter into the Office of the Miniſtry, only according to the Rules laid down in the Word, and not to run unſent. And, *laſtly*, if this Impulſe is from the Spirit of the Lord, it will be a *fitting* and a *qualifying* Impulſe, determining to the Uſe of the *Means* which lead to ſuch an End, ſuch as reading, ſtudying, praying, and the like; for the Spirit never divides the Means from the End; hence, when *Paul* exhorts *Timothy* to fulfil his Miniſtry, he exhorts him, at the ſame Time, to give himſelf to *reading*.

The *outward Call* conſiſts in the *Election* or Choice of the People, the *Trial* of a Man's Qualifications by the *Preſbytery*, their Approbation of them, and *authoritative Miſſion*, by Faſting, Prayer and Impoſition of Hands; and where all theſe concur, (eſpecially if the Perſon has the inward Call, as above deſcribed) it is the *Call of God; as is* clear from the Inſtance of the *Elders of Epheſus*, who had no other Call, and

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yet are owned to be ſet over the Flock by the *Holy Ghoſt*, *Acts* xx. 28. But then,

2. As Miniſters are Servants of Chriſt, ſo they are the Servants of *Adam's Family for Jeſus Sake*, in being *inſtant in Seaſon and out of Seaſon*, beſeeching and obteſting them in Chriſt's Stead to be reconciled unto God. And that Miniſters may ſerve their *Maſter* faithfully, in ſerving the Neceſſities of the Souls of Sinners, we ought to conform and apply our Doctrine to the various Caſes of our Hearers, ſo as to awaken the Secure, ſtrengthen the Weak, comfort theſe that mourn, and convince Gainſayers. Again, in ſerving of Sinners for Jeſus Sake, we ſhould *prepare the Way of the Lord*, by removing all ſtumbling Blocks out of the Way, or rather, by declaring from the Word, that they are already removed; the Law is magnified, Juſtice ſatisfied, God is reconciled, *all Things are ready, therefore come to the Marriage.* This is the great Service in which we ought to be employed about poor Sinners, and every faithful Miniſter will rejoice when the Bridegroom has obtained the Heart and Hand of the Bride. I proceed now, from what has been ſaid, to deduce the following

Inferences, 1. Hence ſee the Neceſſity of preaching the Goſpel; ſays the Apoſtle here, *We preach Chriſt Jeſus the Lord*, and elſewhere, *Wo is unto me, if I preach not the Goſpel.* It is neceſſary, by the expreſs Command of the Lord Jeſus, the alone King and Lawgiver in his Church, *Matth.* xxviii. 18, 19. *All Power is given unto me, in Heaven and in Earth; Go ye therefore and teach all Nations.* And, in order to the perpetual Diſcharge of this Duty, the Lord Chriſt

not

not only *gave Apoſtles, Prophets* and *Evangeliſts*, as extraordinary and temporary Officers, whoſe Office was to expire with themſelves, but he alſo *gave Paſtors*, or Teachers, to be ſtanding Officers in his Church unto the End of the World, *for the perfecting of the Saints, for the Work of the Miniſtry*, and *for the edifying of the Body of Chriſt*, *Eph.* iv. 11. 12. And for the faithful Diſcharge of this Truſt, as well as for the Succeſſion of a Goſpel-Miniſtry, there is a ſpecial Order given to commit this Service unto *faithful Men, who ſhall be able to teach others alſo*, 2 *Tim.* ii. 2. Again, the preaching of the Goſpel is neceſſary, as an *inſtituted Means* for the Converſion and Salvation of Sinners; for where there is no Viſion the People periſh. Altho' the preaching of the Goſpel has not an intrinſick Virtue in itſelf, to effectuate the Salvation of Sinners, *for many are called, but few are choſen*, yet, by the Appointment of God, it is conſtitute the great Means of our Reconciliation and Salvation, hence called *the Word of this Salvation*; and, by the Power of God going along with it, it is mighty to the pulling down of ſtrong Holds, turning from Darkneſs to Light, and from the Power of *Satan* to God: But then it muſt be remembred, that it is the preaching of the Goſpel by theſe who are orderly inveſted with an eccleſiaſtical Office, that is, the ordinary inſtituted Means for the Converſion of Sinners, or the Edification of Saints. For altho' private Chriſtians may ſometimes, in Providence, be inſtrumental in the Converſion or Edification of their Fellow-Creatures, as in the Inſtance of the *Samaritans*, who believed on Chriſt for *the Saying of* the

the Woman, which testified he told me all that ever I did, John iv. 39. Yet the ordinary Means appointed of God, for gathering Sinners to Christ, is the preaching of the Word, by those who are clothed with the Pastoral Office, the Reason is, because *Faith cometh by Hearing.* But *how shall they hear without a Preacher? And how shall they preach except they be sent? Rom.* x. 14, 15. that is, unless they have an *authoritative Mission*, whereby the Ministry is conferred, and Men authorised, as Ambassadors of Christ, to preach the Word of Reconciliation. Hence it follows,

2. That, in the Church assembled, or in the Meeting of the Lord's People for publick Worship, none may warrantably preach the Word of God, in the Name of Christ, but such as have a *divine Calling* unto that Work: For, tho' it is the Duty of Christians to exhort and comfort one another in a private Capacity, for their mutual Edification, yet none can with Authority preach the Word, but such as have the ordinary Calling to the Office of the Ministry, as is plain from many Places of Scripture, particularly *Heb.* v. 4. *No Man taketh this Honour to himself, but he that is called of God*; and the forecited *Rom.* x. 15. *How shall they preach except they be sent?* Besides, there are peculiar Duties required of Ministers, which are not required of other Christians, whatever Gifts of the Spirit they may be endowed with, such as feeding and taking the Oversight of the Flock, as they that must give Account of Souls, *Acts* xx. 28. *Heb.* xiii. 17. As Ambassadors for Christ, they are to pray Sinners in Christ's Stead to be reconciled unto God, *2 Cor.* v. 20. As faithful and wise Stewards,

whom the Lord hath made Rulers over his Hou hold, they are to give them their Portion Meat in due Seaſon, *Luke* xii. 42. Therefo you are to be aware of the dangerous Opinion the *Sectarians* and *Enthuſiaſts*, who affirm, th private Chriſtians endowed with Gifts m preach in the Name of Chriſt, altho' they h no Church-Office.

3. Altho' Miniſters are the Church's *Serva for Jeſus Sake*, yet they do not derive their cleſiaſtical Power from the People, or from t Community of the Faithful, nor are they Se vants and Deputies, who govern the *Houſe* God, by an Authority derived from the *Mul tude*, as the firſt and immediate Subject of eccl ſiaſtical Power. It is true, Miniſters are calle the Church's Servants in our Text; but then, is not becauſe they derive their Power from t People, for in that Caſe they would be t Servants of Men and not of God, but becau they are to exerciſe their Office as Servants Chriſt, for the *Good* and *Benefit* of his Churc There is nothing indeed more plain in Scriptur than that the Power of chuſing Paſtors and oth Officers to a particular Church, belongs to t the Members of it, *Acts* i. 23. vi. 5. xiv. 2 But then, by this *Election* (which is no Act Juriſdiction) Church-Members do not conf the Power of the Keys on the Paſtors or oth Officers choſen, but only *nominate* or deſign hi or them, on whom the *Power* of that Office i to be conferred by eccleſiaſtical Ordination; i is clear from *Acts* vi. 6. where you will find that, after the whole Multitude had choſen ſuch and ſuch Perſons, they ſet them before the A poſtles, who *laid their Hands on them*, or or dained

ined them to their Office by Prayer; and here the Apoſtles acted not according to their extraordinary Character, for, in that Caſe, there uld have been no Need to deſire the People look out for fit Perſons from among themſelves; Apoſtles could have done it by infallible Inration, had they acted *as Apoſtles*, but it is in that they acted as ordinary Miniſters of riſt in the whole of this Matter. It follows n, that as all Church Officers are inſtitute by Lord Jeſus, ſo the Power belonging to them mmediately derived from him; but the Way Manner of being inſtalled into, or put in eſſion of any Office of the Church, particuy the Office of the Miniſtry, or the ordinary y of deriving the Power and Authority beging to the Miniſterial Office from the Lord s, is by the authoritative Miſſion, or Ordion of the Presbytery, unto which the Electir Choice of the People is previouſly neceſſary. disjoining of theſe two, *namely*, the authotive Miſſion and the Choice of the People, ch the Spirit of God has ſo ſtrictly united in pture, is at the Bottom of the dangerous take, which thoſe of the independent Way into upon the one Hand, *namely*, in placing whole of the eccleſiaſtical Vocation *in the le without the Presbytery*; and thoſe in the *liſhed Church*, on the other Hand, who place whole of the eccleſiaſtical Vocation *in the icatories* of the Church *without the People*.

Is Chriſt Jeſus the Lord the great Subject oſpel-Preaching? Then let us, who are Mirs, determine not to know any Thing among Hearers, *ſave Jeſus Chriſt and him crucified*. *ii.* 2. Let us endeavour, as Stewards of the

lyſteries of God, to open the Door of the
e of Mercy as wide as to let in the greateſt
er, to whom we ſhall have Acceſs to preach
glad Tidings; let us endeavour to lead them
hriſt, as the only *Refuge* to ſhelter them
n Sin and Wrath, as the only *Phyſician* who
heal them of all their Diſeaſes, and as the
y *Magazine* and Store-Houſe from whence
y are to be ſupplied with Grace, and Glory,
l every good Thing. Let us endeavour to
int out Chriſt unto Sinners, as made of God
nto them, *Wiſdom* to inſtruct and teach them,
ighteouſneſs to juſtify them, *Sanctification* to re-
ew and cleanſe them, and *Redemption* to ſave
hem. In a Word, as the inexhauſtible Fountain
of all Grace here, and eternal Glory hereafter.
Let us eſſay to preach Chriſt Jeſus the Lord, both
in our Sermons, and in our Miniſterial and Chri-
ſtian Walk. Let us be aware of preaching our-
ſelves, and ſetting up our own Reaſon in the
Room of divine Revelation, and of preaching
out of a vain Oſtentation of our own Parts and
Abilities, whether natural or acquired, and of
ſtudying to pleaſe Men; but let a tender Con-
cern for the Glory of God, and the Salvation of
immortal Souls, animate us in the whole of our
Miniſterial Work. Let us, out of Love to Chriſt
himſelf, put an high Value upon the Souls of
Sinners, and ſpare no Pains in preaching, cate-
chiſing, viſiting and converſing with them for
their Inſtruction and Edification. Let us re-
member that awful Charge which is given us
before God and the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who ſhall
judge the Quick and the Dead at his appearing;
namely, that we preach the Word, be inſtant in
ſeaſon and out of Seaſon, reprove, rebuke, ex-
hort

hort with all Long-ſuffering and Doctrine, 2 *Tim.* iv. 1, 2. and in ſo doing we ſhall both ſave ourſelves and them that hear us. Let us be *valiant for the Truth* in this Day of Darkneſs and treading down in our Valley of Viſion; the more that the Wicked are endeavouring to *make void* the Laws and Ordinances of Chriſt. Let us love them the more, and contend the more earneſtly for them, as good *Soldiers of Chriſt.* Let us ſet our Faces like a Flint againſt the Current of the Defection and Apoſtacy of our Day, and let us not be afraid of all that Man can do, for *the Truth ſhall make us free.* Let us then go on in our preaching and witneſſing Work in the Strength of the Lord, leaning upon his Faithfulneſs in that Promiſe, *my Preſence ſhall go with you, and I will give you Reſt.*

Laſtly, Are Miniſters to *preach Chriſt Jeſus the Lord?* Then it is the indiſpenſible Duty of the Hearers to *believe* in him, and receive him as he is offered in the Goſpel. We have been eſſaying to tell you, what it is to *preach Chriſt*, and to lay before you ſome of theſe precious Truths that are contained and wrapt up under that glorious and unfathomable *Name*, *Chriſt Jeſus the Lord*; and now we are come to require your cordial Aſſent unto the Goſpel-Report concerning Chriſt, as the only Ordinance of God for your Salvation; there remains *no other Sacrifice* for Sin, neither is there Salvation in any other. *Jehovah*, a gracious God, who gives Being unto his Words of Promiſe, is juſt now making a *Grant of his Son* unto every one of you in this Company, as the All of our Salvation, ſaying, *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleaſed, hear ye him.* Sirs, Will you refuſe ma-

matchleſs and *unſpeakable Gift* of God? *God ſo loved the World, that he gave his only begotten Son.* Will you ſtand it out againſt the *Command* of God, binding upon every one of you here preſent? *This is his Commandment, that we ſhould believe on the Name of his Son Jeſus Chriſt,* 1 *John* iv. 23. Will ye reject the Counſel of God againſt yourſelves? Will you wrong your own Souls ſo far? O Sirs, think you nothing of it, that God condeſcends to be *your God;* that the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, *Immanuel,* makes over himſelf, his Perſon, Offices, and all the Fruits of his Mediation to be *your's;* that he condeſcends to be your *Husband,* to betrothe you to himſelf for ever; your *Shepherd* to feed you; your *Leader* and *Commander* to guide and protect you, and your *Saviour* to redeem you, both by Price and Power. Thus ſaith the Lord Jeſus unto every one of you, *Look unto me, and be ye ſaved.* Behold, we ſet him before you, and beſeech you in his Stead, that ye be reconciled unto God; *the Spirit and the Bride ſay, Come, and whoſoever will, let him take the Waters of Life freely;* and, *if you will not do ſo, behold you have ſinned againſt the Lord, and be ſure your Sin will find you out.* Your Sin, in neglecting this *great Salvation,* will find you out in the Day when *every Eye ſhall ſee him, and they alſo which pierced him, and ſhall wail becauſe of him.*

I conclude with a Word to you who are the Members of this *aſſociate Congregation* of *Lintoun.* Sirs, you have called a Miniſter in a witneſſing Way, as a Company of *Seceders* from the *preſent Judicatories,* becauſe of their manifeſt Apoſtacy from the covenanted Reformation of this Church; and we are now going about the ſolemn Work of *ordaining* a *Miniſter* among you by Prayer and Impoſition of Hands, as a *Presbytery conſtituted* in the Name of the Lord Jeſus, and *aſſociate* together for the Exerciſe of the Government and Diſcipline of his Houſe, *according to his* Word, and the Reformation Principles

pies of this Church resolved thereon, in Oppo-
on to the ſtrong Current of Defection and Back-
iding from the ſame at this Day, and for the Help
id Relief the Lord's oppreſſed Heritage thro' the
and. As we are, on this Day of *Faſting* and Hu-
iliation in the Name of the Lord Jeſus, to *ordain*
im to diſpenſe the Bread of Life amongſt you, as a
liniſter of Jeſus Chriſt, whom you have unani-
ouſly choſen and called, ſo ſee that ye *receive with*
leekneſs the ingrafted Word, which is able to ſave
ur Souls, James i. 21. Receive the Goſpel from
ie Mouth of your *Miniſter*, as if God were ſpeak-
g to you by him, for he is an Ambaſſador to you
Chriſt's Stead, therefore, with Reverence and god-
Fear, entertain the Meſſage which he brings you
his *Maſter*'s Name. Pray much for your *Miniſter*,
you would deſire his Labours to be ſucceſsful a-
ong you, *Rom.* xv. 30. Pray that he may be a-
ndantly furniſhed for his Work, from him who
s *received Gifts for Men.* Pray that the Word,
hich he delivers unto you, may come *in the De-*
nſtration of the Spirit and of Power, and that he
ay be directed to ſpeak a Word in Seaſon to your
rticular Caſes. Beware of liſtning to the Re-
oaches of a wicked World, who will endeavour,
o' moſt groundleſly, to calumniate and defame
ur *Miniſter*, for no other Reaſon, at the Bottom,
hatever Way they may colour it, but becauſe he
eſpouſing and defending the born-down Intereſt
Chriſt at this Day: Thus you know they treat-
the Lord's Meſſengers and Witneſſes of old, *Re-*
rt, ſay they, and we will report; therefore ſee
at you highly eſteem your *Miniſter*, and love him
r his Work's Sake, 1 *Theſſ.* v. 13. Submit to
e Diſcipline which ſhall be exerciſed, according
the Word of God, by him, in Conjunction with
e Elders of this Congregation, *Heb.* xiii. 17. *O-*
them that have the Rule over you, and ſubmit your-
ves. And as your *Miniſter* is to communicate to
yo

you in *Spirituals*, ſo I make no Doubt but you ſee it to be your Duty to communicate to him in *Temporals*, *Gal.* vi. 6. *Let him that is taught in the Word, communicate to him that teacheth in all good Things*; for *ſo hath the Lord ordained, that they who preach the Goſpel ſhould live of the Goſpel*, 1 *Cor.* ix. 14. And ſince your great Deſign in calling your Miniſter, and ours in ordaining him, is, that he may preach Chriſt Jeſus the Lord, ſo ſee that ye account the Lord Jeſus Chriſt worthy of all Acceptation, and, in ſo doing, when your Miniſter comes to give an Account of his Stewardſhip, he will be able to do it *with Joy, and not with Grief*.

Finally, Since you are a *witneſſing Congregation*, as I ſaid, therefore ſee that you be rooted and grounded in the Faith, and *eſtabliſhed in the preſent Truth*, that you be not carried about with every Wind of Doctrine, and the cunning Artifices of them who ly in wait to deceive. Sirs, this is a Day wherein many, like *Ephraim*, are *faintly turning Back*; and if you, or any of you, ſhould fall away, or turn cold and indifferent about the Cauſe of Chriſt, which you are now eſpouſing, after ſuch a ſolemn Profeſſion which you are this Day making before many Witneſſes, What Handle will you give to the Enemy to blaſpheme? And what unſpeakable Wrong will you bring upon your own Souls? For, if *any Man draw back*, ſaith the Lord, *my Soul ſhall have no Pleaſure in him*. Oh, then, ſeek to be found in the *Clifts* of the Rock of Ages, intereſted in Chriſt by a vital Union with him, and then there ſhall be no Fear of you, tho' the *Floods* of Tribulation ſhould lift up their Voice, and make a mighty Noiſe, he that *ſits upon the Floods* will ſtrengthen, ſtabliſh and ſettle you; *the Lamb which is in the Midſt of the Throne ſhall feed* you, *and lead* you *unto living Fountains of Waters, and God ſhall wipe away all Tears from* your *Eyes*.

FINIS.